CHAPTER XLVm

PSYCHOLOGY AND STRATEGY

REFLECTING on the proceedings of the Rome Conference I had an uneasy feeling that the strategy of the Allies was not dictated solely by considerations of military advantage to their cause as a whole. The arguments advanced at the Conference appeared to me to have very little to do with the various proposals which came before us. The motives that prompted either support or opposition to any particular scheme, arose from incentives that were not revealed in the course of conversation between the Allied representatives. My experience of life has taught me that men and women are not moved so much by argument as by hidden motives which are never exposed in the interchange of words. Once the undisclosed impulses or prejudices are overcome the task of the persuader becomes simpler. The road has then been cleared for reason. The reluctance shown to help Cadorna with the guns necessary to enable him to stage a powerful offensive, was defended in the Conference room by considerations much too trivial to be genuine. What, then, was the real objection which stood in the way ?

Hidden motives at work in Rome

Conference

Luigi Villari in his fascinating book *Villari's view* "The War on the Italian Front"[5] referring to my Rome plan for a combined offensive on the Italian Front, says :—